

### *Congressman Supported Use of Local Labor for Major Project*

*Wallkill, NY* -- Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today joined representatives of the Hudson Valley Building and Trades Council for the groundbreaking ceremony of the long-awaited reconstruction of Exit 122 on Route 17/Future I-86 in the Town of Wallkill, New York. Hinchey wrote to the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) earlier this year advocating strongly for the use of a Project Labor Agreement to ensure the significant construction project utilized local workers and area companies. Hinchey also contacted the New York State Comptroller's office to move forward the project's approval, citing the economic impacts on the Hudson Valley region.

"This project will directly employ between 50 and 100 trades men and women at any given time during its 30-month construction," said Hinchey. "The reconstruction of Exit 122 is an essential next step in the long-term conversion of State Route 17 to Interstate 86. I sponsored legislation authorizing the creation of I-86 in 1993 when I first went to Congress, and today we're seeing the direct results. The use of a Project Labor Agreement will ensure that the upgrade of Exit 122 in Orange County will be done using area businesses and local workers from the surrounding communities. It will also help to ensure that this vitally important highway upgrade will be completed in a quality, timely and cost-efficient manner."

The project contractor estimates that between 50 and 100 jobs will be directly created during the two and a half year long construction process. The New York State Department of Transportation had previously estimated that project would support or create 1,800 jobs through direct and indirect economic impacts. This estimate was based on a Federal Highway Administration formula, which calculates that 24 direct and indirect jobs are created for every \$1 million spent on infrastructure. The total cost of the project is now set at \$72.3 million. Using the FHA calculation, the project would support or create more than 1,700 jobs.

In 1993, as a freshman member of Congress, Hinchey, along with the late U.S. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, introduced legislation to convert the state road into an interstate highway. In 1998, a Hinchey authored provision in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21 Century (TEA-21) was passed, and Interstate 86 became a part of High Priority Corridor 36, which

added Route 17 to the future interstate system. This allowed New York State to begin using federal dollars for the conversion of Route 17 to Interstate 86.